

Please substitute amended claims 1, 5, 8, 12, 14, 18, 20, and 21 as follows for the pending claims with the same number:

1. (FOUR TIMES AMENDED) An integrated extendable load floor assembly for a vehicle having a rear end with a floor and sides extending upwardly and along the floor to form a cargo area with an opening and a decklid for closing an upper portion of the opening of the cargo area, said integrated extendable load floor assembly comprising:

a plurality of rails adapted to be disposed upon the sides above the floor of the rear end;

Q2 a load floor operatively cooperating with said rails for sliding movement therealong and including an endgate pivotally attached to a rear longitudinal end thereof having an upright closed position and a horizontal open position, said endgate closing a longitudinal end portion of the opening of the cargo area when in said upright closed position adjacent a rear of the vehicle, whereby the decklid and the endgate cooperate together to close the opening of the cargo area; and

a load floor latching mechanism comprising a striker and a latch, one of said striker and said latch being connected to a rearward longitudinal end of said load floor and the other one of said striker and said latch being connected to the rear end of the vehicle to latch said load floor in a closed position.

Q3 5. (AMENDED) An integrated extendable load floor assembly as set forth in claim 1 including a latching mechanism to latch said endgate to said load floor in said upright closed position.

8. (FOUR TIMES AMENDED) An integrated extendable load floor assembly for a vehicle having a rear storage area with a longitudinal open end comprising:

at least one rail adapted to be disposed upon a side of the rear storage area;

a load floor cooperating with said at least one rail allowing for a selective sliding movement in and out of the rear storage area of the vehicle and including a rear panel that is cooperatively attached to a bottom of a rear edge of said load floor allowing selective positioning of the said rear panel in an upright closed position and a lower horizontal open position, said rear panel closing the longitudinal open end of the rear storage area when in said upright closed position adjacent a rear of the vehicle; and

a load floor latching mechanism comprising a striker and a latch, one of said striker and said latch being connected to a rearward longitudinal end of said load floor and the other one of said striker and said latch being connected to the rear storage area of the vehicle to latch said load floor in a closed position, said load floor latching mechanism including a movable handle disposed on said load floor.

12. (AMENDED) An integrated extendable load floor assembly as set forth in claim 8 including a rear panel latching mechanism that latches said rear panel in said upright closed position.

14. (FOUR TIMES AMENDED) A vehicle comprising:

a body including a rear end having a floor and sides extending upwardly and along said floor to form a rear storage area having an opening;

a decklid pivotally secured to said rear end to close a first portion of said opening of said rear storage area in a closed position and to allow access to said rear storage area in an open position; and

an integrated extendable load floor assembly cooperating with said rear storage area, said integrated extendable load floor assembly including at least one rail disposed upon each of said sides of said rear storage area and a load floor cooperating with said at least one rail, said load floor having selective sliding movement in and out of said rear storage area of the vehicle and including a rear panel that is cooperatively attached to a bottom of a rear edge of said load floor allowing selective positioning of the said rear panel in an upright closed position and a horizontal open position, said rear panel closing a second portion of said opening of said rear storage area when in said upright closed position adjacent a rear of the vehicle, whereby said decklid and said rear panel cooperate together to close said opening of said rear storage area, and a load floor latching mechanism comprising a striker and a latch, one of said striker and said latch being connected to a rearward longitudinal end of said load floor and the other one of said striker and said latch being connected to the body of the vehicle to latch said load floor in a closed position.

18. (AMENDED) A vehicle as set forth in claim 14 including a rear panel latching mechanism that latches said rear panel in said upright closed position.

20. (FOUR TIMES AMENDED) An automotive vehicle comprising:
a body including a rear end having a floor and sides extending upwardly and along said floor to form a cargo area with an opening;

a plurality of rails spaced laterally and extending longitudinally between said sides above said floor;

a load floor operatively cooperating with said rails for sliding movement therealong;

a decklid pivotally secured to said sides to close a first portion of said opening of said cargo area in a closed position and to allow access to said cargo area in an open position and to allow said load floor to be extended when said decklid is in said open position;

an endgate pivotally connected to said load floor and having a closed upright position and an open horizontal position, said endgate closing a second portion of said opening of said cargo area when in said closed upright position adjacent a rear of the vehicle, whereby said decklid and said endgate cooperate together to close said opening of said cargo area;

an endgate latching mechanism that latches said endgate in said upright closed position; and

a load floor latching mechanism comprising a striker and a latch, one of said striker and said latch being connected to a rearward longitudinal end of said load floor and the other one of said striker and said latch being connected to the body of the vehicle to latch said load floor in a closed position.

21. (FOUR TIMES AMENDED) A sedan type automotive vehicle comprising:

a body including a rear end having a floor and sides extending upwardly and along said floor to form a cargo area with an opening;

a load floor for sliding movement in and out of said cargo area;

an endgate pivotally connected to said load floor and having a closed upright position and an open horizontal position, said endgate closing a longitudinal end portion of said opening of said cargo area when in said closed upright position adjacent a rear of the vehicle;

ES a decklid pivotally secured to said sides and cooperating with said endgate to close said opening of said cargo area in a closed position and to allow access to said cargo area in an open position and to allow objects to be removed from said cargo area when said decklid is in said open position; and

a load floor latching mechanism comprising a striker and a latch, one of said striker and said latch being connected to a rearward longitudinal end of said load floor and the other one of said striker and said latch being connected to the body of the vehicle to latch said load floor in a closed position.
